

Message Text

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ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 PA-04 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 RSC-01 SP-03

SS-20 SCCT-02 INRE-00 SSO-00 SCSE-00 SCA-01 SY-04

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9234

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TAGS: PINS ET

SUBJ: UPI, AP POOL REPORT ON ETHIOPIA ELF KIDNAPPING

SECSTATE FOR S/PRS

REF: STATE 044639

POOL STORY FOR UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL (UPI) AND
ASSOCIATED PRESS (AP) PLEASE FORWARD....

ADDIS ABABA MAY 30, 1974 -- ETHIOPIA HAS DESCRIBED AS
"AN ABHORENT ACT" THE KIDNAPPING OF TWO NURSES--AND THE
KILLING OF ONE OF THEM--NEAR THE AMERICAN EVANGELICAL
MISSION HOSPITAL IN THE ERITREAN TOWN OF GHINDA THREE
DAYS AGO. (MONDAY)

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH SAID THE
ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT WAS GREATLY SADDENED BY THE ACT AND
PLEDGED ITS SUPPORT FOR ANY MOVES MADE TO SECURE THE
RELEASE OF THE ONE NURSE STILL HELD.

HOWEVER A WESTERN DIPLOMAT SAID "THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT
SHOULD BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN BRINGING ABOUT THE NURSE'S
RELEASE NOT MERELY PLEDGING ITS SUPPORT FOR SUCH EFFORTS."
THE NURSE STILL HELD CAPTIVE IS IDENTIFIED AS A 24-YEAR-OLD
AMERICAN MRS. DEBORAH DORTZBACH RPT DEBORAH DORTZBACH, WHO'S
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FIVE MONTHS PREGNANT AND IN "VERY DELICATE HEALTH." MRS.

DORTZBACH, WHO'S FROM PENNSYLVANIA, WAS LAST SEEN BEING FORCED OFF INTO THE HILLS BY HER ARMED ABDUCTORS.

HER HUSBAND IS A DOCTOR AT THE HOSPITAL IN GHINDA. THE DEAD WOMAN IS 54-YEAR-OLD MRS. ANNA STICKWERDA RPT ANNA STICKWERDA FROM THE NETHERLANDS. SHE WAS FOUND A FEW HOURS AFTER THE MONDAY MORNING ATTACK IN A NEARBY VALLEY WITH A BULLET THROUGH HER FOREHEAD.

AN EARLIER HOSPITAL STATEMENT SAID THE ARMED MEN WERE MEMBERS OF THE ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT--THE SEPARATIST ORGANIZATION WAGING WAR AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE. THE STATEMENT SAID THE HOSPITAL WAS BEING CLOSED IMMEDIATELY AND NO MORE PATIENTS WOULD BE ADMITTED. IT ALSO SAID THE STAFF WAS BEING EVACUATED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

MEANWHILE, RELIABLE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID A HELICOPTER APPARENTLY SENT TO PICK UP THE FIVE NORTH AMERICANS (THREE AMERICAN AND TWO CANADIANS)--KIDNAPPED BY THE ELF WHEN THEIR HELICOPTER WAS FORCED DOWN DURING A VIOLENT STORM NEAR MASSAWA OVER TWO MONTHS AGO WAS FORCED TO FLY THE AMERICAN NURSE TO AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION.

THE HELICOPTER WAS PILOTED BY A CANADIAN, GRANT WYATT. IT WAS IN GHINDA THREE AND A HALF YEAR AGO (JANUARY 11, 1971) THAT AN ARMY COURIER, SPECIALIST RICARDO ECHEANDIA RPT RICARDO ECHEANDIA OF 345 BERRY STREET, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK CITY, WAS SHOT AND KILLED DELIVERING ARMY MAIL FROM KAGNEW STATION, AN AMERICAN MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER AT ASMARA WHICH HAS SINCE BEEN PRACTICALLY PHASED OUT. THE AREA AROUND GHINDA HAS LONG BEEN REGARDED AS A STRONGHOLD OF THE ELF.

THE TWO NURSES WORKED AT THE 50-BED AMERICAN EVANGELICAL MISSION HOSPITAL WHICH HAS BEEN THE TARGET OF PAST ELF RAIDS FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL ROBBERIES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY THIS IS THE WORST INCIDENT IN THE AREA SINCE THE EARLIER KILLING. GHINDA, ABOUT 25 MILES FROM THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF ASMARA ON THE MAIN ROAD TO THE RED SEA PORT OF MASSAWA, IS NOT VERY FAR FROM THE SPOT WHERE THE ELF CAPTURED THE FIVE NORTH AMERICAN EMPLOYEES OF THE AMERICAN OIL COMPANY, TENNACO, THE MEN, IDENTIFIED AS DON WEDERFORT, THE PILOT, OF CALGARY, ALBERTA, CLIFFORD JAMES, TORONTO, ONTARIO; WILLIAM CASCE OF TEXAS; J.W. ROGERS OF NEW YORK STATE AND MATTEE TAVOLA FROM UNCLASSIFIED

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CALIFORNIA WERE ABDUCTED BY THIRTY BANDITS AND LATER THE ELF CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR KIDNAPPING. THE PRESIDENT OF THE ELF'S REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, MR. IDRIS MOHAMMED ADAM, RPT IDRIS MOHAMMED ADAM, CONFIRMED THE THE MEN WERE ALIVE AND IN GOOD HEALTH AND SAID THEY WOULD BE FREED IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, INCLUDING MANY CAPTURED ELF MEMBERS. ENDS POOL.

WYMAN

NOTE BY OC/T: ADDIS ABABA 6066 NOT PASSED.

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